

In the Claims:

Please cancel claims 54-57 and 64 without prejudice.

1- 57. (Cancelled)

D1
Claim 58 (currently amended): A expandable stent, comprising, in its expanded condition: a plurality of interconnected flexible cells defining a stent having a proximal end, a central section and a distal end and a longitudinal axis, the cells arranged in a plurality of interconnected flexible rows disposed along the longitudinal axis of the stent with at least one distal row disposed at the distal end of the stent and at least one proximal row disposed at the proximal end of the stent, wherein the cells disposed in the at least one ~~distal~~ row at an end of the stent are adapted to exert greater radial force and are adapted to be more flexible than the cells disposed in the rows in the central section.

Add the following new claim:

D2
Claim 70 (new): The stent of claim 58 wherein the cells disposed in the at least one distal row of the stent are adapted to exert greater radial force and are adapted to be more flexible than the cells disposed in the rows in the central section.

D3
Claim 59 (currently amended): The stent of claim 58 70, wherein cells in the most distal row and the row proximal to the most distal row of the stent are adapted to exert greater radial force and are adapted to be more flexible than the cells disposed in the rows in the central section.

Add the following new claims:

D4
Claim 71 (new): The stent of claim 58 wherein the cells disposed in the at least one proximal row of the stent are adapted to exert greater radial force and are adapted to be more flexible than the cells disposed in the rows in the central section.

Claim 72 (new): The stent of claim 71, wherein cells in the most proximal row and the row distal to the most proximal row of the stent are adapted to exert greater radial force and are adapted to be more flexible than the cells disposed in the rows in the central section.

Claim 73 (new): The stent of claim 59 wherein the cells disposed in the at least one proximal row of the stent are adapted to exert greater radial force and are adapted to be more flexible than the cells disposed in the rows in the central section.

D4
Claim 74 (new): The stent of claim 73, wherein cells in the most distal row and the row proximal to the most distal row of the stent and the cells in the most proximal row and the row distal to the most proximal row of the stent are adapted to exert greater radial force and are adapted to be more flexible than the cells disposed in the rows in the central section.

D5
Claim 60 (currently amended): A expandable stent, comprising in its expanded condition: a plurality of interconnected flexible cells defining a stent having a proximal end, a central section and a distal end and a longitudinal axis, the cells arranged in a plurality of interconnected flexible rows disposed along the longitudinal axis of the stent with at least one distal row disposed at the distal end of the stent and at least one proximal row disposed at the proximal end of the stent, wherein the cells disposed in the at least one ~~distal~~ row at an end of the stent are adapted to be more flexible than the cells disposed in the rows in the central section.

{ Add the following new claim:

Claim 75 (new): The stent of claim 60 wherein the cells disposed in the at least one distal row of the stent are adapted to be more flexible than the cells disposed in the rows in the central section.

D6
D7
Claim 61 (currently amended): The stent of claim 60 ~~75~~, wherein cells in the most distal row and the row proximal to the most distal row of the stent are adapted to be more flexible than the cells disposed in the rows in the central section.

Add the following new claims:

Claim 76 (new): The stent of claim 60 wherein the cells disposed in the at least one proximal row of the stent are adapted to be more flexible than the cells disposed in the rows in the central section.

Claim 77 (new): The stent of claim 76, wherein cells in the most proximal row and the row distal to the most proximal row of the stent are adapted to be more flexible than the cells disposed in the rows in the central section.

Claim 78 (new): The stent of claim 61 wherein the cells disposed in the at least one proximal row of the stent are adapted to be more flexible than the cells disposed in the rows in the central section.

Claim 79 (new): The stent of claim 78, wherein cells in the most distal row and the row proximal to the most distal row of the stent and the cells in the most proximal row and the row distal to the most proximal row of the stent are adapted to be more flexible than the cells disposed in the rows in the central section.

Amend claim 62 as follows:

Claim 62 (currently amended): An expandable stent, comprising:

- a) a plurality of interconnected flexible cells defining a stent having a proximal end a central section and a distal end and a longitudinal axis, the cells arranged in a plurality of interconnected flexible rows disposed along the longitudinal axis of the stent with at least one distal row disposed at the distal end of the stent and at least one proximal row disposed at the proximal end of the stent, each of the flexible cells including a first member, a second member, a third member and, a fourth member;
- b) a first C-shaped loop disposed between the first member and the third member;
- c) a second C-shaped loop disposed between the second member and the fourth member;

d) adjacent rows of cells connected to each other; and

e) wherein the cells of the at least one ~~distal~~ row at an end of the stent are provided

with first and third members that are shorter than the first and third members in the central section, and wherein the at least one ~~distal~~ row at an end of the stent is coupled to a ~~next~~ an adjacent row ~~in the proximal direction~~ with flexible connectors that result in a more flexible connection than connections between cells in the rows of the stent in the central area.

Add the following new claim:

Claim 80 (new): The stent of claim 62, wherein the cells of the at least one distal row are provided with first and third members that are shorter than the first and third members in the central section

Claim 63 (currently amended): The stent of claim 62 ~~80~~, wherein cells in the most distal row and the row proximal to the most distal row of the stent are coupled to a next adjacent row in the proximal direction with flexible connectors that result in a more flexible connection than connections between cells in the rows of the stent in the central area.

Add the following new claims:

Claim 81 (new): The stent of claim 62, wherein the cells of the at least one proximal row are provided with first and third members that are shorter than the first and third members in the central section

Claim 82 (new): The stent of claim 81, wherein cells in the most proximal row and the row distal to the most proximal row of the stent are coupled to a next adjacent row in the distal direction with flexible connectors that result in a more flexible connection than connections between cells in the rows of the stent in the central area.

Claim 83 (new): The stent of claim 80, wherein the cells of the at least one proximal row are provided with first and third members that are shorter than the first and third members in the central section

Claim 84 (new): The stent of claim 83, wherein cells in the most distal row and the row proximal to the most distal row of the stent are coupled to a next adjacent row in the proximal direction with flexible connectors that result in a more flexible connection than connections between cells in the rows of the stent in the central area and cells in the most proximal row and the row distal to the most proximal row of the stent are coupled to a next adjacent row in the distal direction with flexible connectors that result in a more flexible connection than connections between cells in the rows of the stent in the central area.

Claim 64 (cancelled)

Amend claim 65 as follows:

Claim 65 (currently amended): A cylindrical stent, having a longitudinal axis, comprising:
a multiplicity of sets of strut members with the strut members being joined by loops and with adjacent sets of strut members being coupled each to the other by structures ~~extending generally in the longitudinal direction~~, all forming circumferentially extending rows of cells, said stent having a proximal end, a distal end and a center section,
said stent having two types of sets of strut members, a first type of set of strut members and a second type of set of strut members,
the first type of set of strut members having a shorter length as compared to the length of the second type of set of strut members,
at least some of the first type of set of strut members coupled to adjacent strut members by structures ~~extending generally in the longitudinal direction~~ which are more flexible than those coupling said second type of strut members.

Claim 66 (original): The stent as recited in claim 65 where said first type of set of strut members has a length in the longitudinal direction of the stent that is less than the length in the longitudinal direction of said second type of set of strut members.

~~Add the following new claims:~~

Claim 85 (new): The stent as recited in claim 65 where said first type of set of strut members are disposed in a circumferentially extending row at the distal end of the stent.

Claim 86 (new): The stent as recited in claim 65 where said first type of set of strut members are disposed in a circumferentially extending row at the distal end of the stent.

Claim 67 (original): The stent as recited in claim 66 where said stent is a radially self-expanding stent.

Amend claim 68 as follows:

Claim 68 (currently amended): A cylindrical stent, having a longitudinal axis, comprising:

a multiplicity of sets of strut members with the strut members joined by loops and with adjacent sets of strut members being coupled each to the other by structures ~~extending generally in the longitudinal direction~~ forming circumferentially extending rows of cells,

said stent having a proximal end, a distal end and a center section located between said proximal and distal ends,

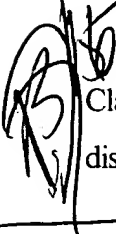
said stent having two types of sets of strut members, a first type of set of strut members and a second type of set of strut members,

the first type of set of strut members having a shorter length as compared to the length of the second type of set of strut members,

the first type of set of strut members coupled to adjacent strut members by structures ~~extending generally in the longitudinal direction~~ which are more flexible than those coupling said second type of strut members.

Add the following new claims:

Claim 87 (new): The stent as recited in claim 68 where said first type of set of strut members are disposed in a circumferentially extending row at the distal end of the stent.

 Claim 88 (new): The stent as recited in claim 68 where said first type of set of strut members are disposed in a circumferentially extending row at the distal end of the stent.

Claim 69 (original): The stent as recited in claim 68 where said first type of set of strut members has a length in the longitudinal direction of said stent that is less than the length in the longitudinal direction of said second type of set of strut members.